REMARKS

Claims 1-67 and 72 are cancelled; claim 68 is amended; new claim 75 is added; and claims 68-71 and 73-75 are pending in the application.

The pending claims stand rejected over Applicant's admitted prior art and Pfiester (4,984,042). Applicant has amended claim 68, from which the remaining claims depend, and believes that such amendments place all of the pending claims in condition for allowance.

Amended claim 68 recites a semiconductor construction comprising a semiconductive material substrate and a conductive layer over the substrate. The conductive layer is recited to have a thin segment between a pair of thicker segments, with one of the thicker segments being a first thicker segment and the other being a second thicker segment. A first gate stack is recited to be over the first thicker segment and a second gate stack is recited to be over the second thicker segment. The first and second gate stacks are recited to be spaced from one another by a gap extending over the thin segment. The first and second gate stacks are recited to comprise one or more conductive materials over the thicker segments and to comprise one or more insulative materials over the one or more conductive materials. Further, the amended claim recites that the stacks have sidewalls extending substantially vertically along the thicker segments, the one or more conductive materials, and the one or more insulative materials. The amended claim also recites that a masking material is over portions of the first and second stacks, and has an opening extending therethrough to the thin segment. The opening has a periphery that includes the stack sidewalls. The thicker segments, one or more conductive materials, and

one or more insulative materials of the stacks are recited to be exposed along the stack sidewalls within the opening. Finally, the claim recites that at least one conductively-doped region is within the substrate under the thin segment.

The amendment to claim 68 is supported by the originally-filed application at, for example, Fig. 7. Specifically, Fig. 7 shows exemplary first and second gate stacks 30 and 32 comprising thicker segments of a conductive layer 16, comprising conductive materials 18 and 20 over the thicker segment, and comprising an insulative material 22 over the conductive materials 18 and 20. The stacks are shown to comprise sidewalls 34 and 36 extending substantially vertically along the thicker segments, conductive materials and insulative materials. A masking material 102 is shown to be over portions of the first and second stacks 30 and 32, and to have an opening extending therethrough to a thin segment 100 of the conductive layer 16. The opening is shown to have a periphery that includes the stack sidewalls 34 and 36, and it is shown that the thicker segments of conductive layer 16, the conductive materials 18 and 20, and the insulative material 22 are exposed along the stack sidewalls 34 and 36 within the opening.

Amended claim 68 is believed allowable over the cited references for at least the reason that the references do not suggest or disclose all of the recited subject matter of claim 68. For instance, the references do not suggest or disclose the recited construction having sidewalls of first and second gate stacks containing exposed thicker segments of a conductive layer, exposed conductive materials, and exposed insulative materials, in combination with the thin segment of the conductive layer within a recited opening, and the recited conductively-doped region within a substrate under the recited thin segment.

It is noted that the only of the Examiner's cited references which discloses a conductive layer having thick segments within gate stacks, and a thin segment between the thick segments, is Applicants' admitted prior art. However, the figures of Applicants' admitted prior art which show conductively-doped regions within a substrate (Figs. 4 and 5), also show that sidewalls of the thickened portions of the conductive layer (sidewalls of thickened regions of portion 16) are not exposed within an opening. Rather, such thickened portion sidewalls are protected by spacers 42 and 44. Similarly, the sidewalls of conductive materials within the stacks comprising the thickened segments, and the sidewalls of insulative materials within the stacks comprising the thickened segments, are also not exposed when diffusion regions are within a substrate. Rather, the sidewalls of the conductive materials and insulative materials of the stacks are covered by the sidewall spacers 42 and 44.

The cited reference of Pfiester, like Applicants' admitted prior art, does not suggest or disclose the claim 68 recited structure in which gate stacks comprising the recited thicker segments, conductive materials and insulative materials, have sidewalls standing substantially vertically along the thicker segments, conductive materials and insulative materials which are exposed within an opening as part of a construction containing at least one conductively-doped region within a recited substrate and under a thin segment that extends between the recited thicker segments. It is inconceivable that any combination of the Examiner's cited references could suggest or disclose such recited feature of claim 68 since neither reference provides any suggestion or disclosure of the relevant limitations.

For the above-discussed reasons, claim 68 is believed to be allowable over the Examiner's cited references, and Applicant therefore requests formal allowance of claim 68 in the Examiner's next action.

Claims 69-71 and 73-75 depend from claim 68, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons discussed above regarding claim 68.

Pending claims 68-71 and 73-75 are allowable for the reasons discussed above, and Applicant therefore requests formal allowance of such claims in the Examiner's next action.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 3/28/05 By: _____

David G. Latwesen, Ph.D.
Reg. No. 38,533
WELLS ST. JOHN P.S.